

to denote "the sacred meaning of the Old and New Testaments," or as we call them, "the Scriptures," not merely something written, and certainly not the sacred writings of another religion. , —

Since γραφή is modified by the adjective πᾶσα, whatever the verse is stating about γραφή it is stating about "all" or "every" sacred writing of the Old and New Testaments. Following γραφή there are two adjectives, the grammar of which has occasioned problems for translators. These adjectives are θεόπνευστος and ὠφέλιμος.

θεόπνευστος means "God-breathed" and ὠφέλιμος means "profitable" or "valuable" or "useful" or "beneficial". But what is the grammatical arrangement of these adjectives? Should the translation read (with both adjectives attributive): "All God-breathed and profitable Scripture (is) for teaching, etc."? Or should it read (with one adjective attributive and one predicate): "All God-breathed Scripture (is) profitable for teaching, etc."? Or should it read (with both adjectives predicate): "All Scripture (is) God-breathed, and (is) profitable for teaching, etc."? Notice that in all three translations the copula (is) must be supplied, since the Greek text assumes it.

The first translation is extremely awkward, since "profitable" is a word which seems to need completion (profitable for what purpose or end?), and the completion of words, which follow in the prepositional phrase, "for teaching, for refutation of error, etc." are separated from the word "profitable" by the word "Scripture".

The second translation, although possible, is in need of justification, since it makes one adjective attributive and the other predicate, with no apparent basis or reason.

The third translation, which renders both adjectives as predicate, would appear to be both smooth and consistent -- "All Scripture (is) God-breathed and (is) profitable for teaching, for refutation of error, for correction of faults, for discipline in righteousness."

Accepting this third translation as the best rendering of the text, we learn that all Scripture, i.e., every part of the Old and New Testaments, is God-breathed. The meaning of the word θεόπνευστος does not appear to be that God took human words or human instruments and breathed into them (which might be implied from the English word "inspiration"), but rather that God breathed, and from His mouth came

Scripture. This conception builds on a phenomenon which persons living in the first century would have known about: that of exhaling air in the act of speaking.